DUNLAP

south carolina
educational television

drawer L
2712 millwood avenue
columbia, south carolina 29250

December 15, 1986

Ms. Ruth Sproat
South Carolina ETV Network
2512 Millwood Avenue
Columbia, S.C. 29250

Dear Ruth:

Quick answers to the four questions you pose about the India Video Festival.

1. Did I feel audiences were responsive? As you know, I was only present for the last day in Trivandrum and not at all in Ahmedabad. The audience in Bangalore was very responsive, both in general and to the material I presented--mainly, I suspect, because the audience consisted mostly of professionals who engaged the material we offered on the level we'd anticipated. The concept of the festival was not so much to divert a general audience as to inform a sophisticated one, and, when the audience was what we expected, the reaction was what we'd hoped for. In Trivandrum, the audience was either students under the thumbs of their nervous faculty or independents with axes to grind that had little to do with television in America. Once we adjusted to the audience, the discussion in Trivandrum was certainly vigorous and probably therapeutic. In Bangalore, the response was superb.

2. The Festival's strengths and weaknesses? My main impressions are of Bangalore. There the major hidden agenda had to do with producers working within a very restrictive system, with minimal resources and little chance of broadcast distribution. As intrigued as they were in a professional way by what is being done in America, they were also desperately concerned in a personal way to make their own system more accommodating. The blunt fact of the matter is that their main problem is more fundamental than technology or technique. Doordarshan itself is under fire, of course, and at times there was an almost ritualistic conflict between the rhetorical indignation of guests (directed at Doordarshan) and the stoical silence of their hosts (Doordarshan, after all, co-sponsored the forum).

Given this basic reality, I think the Festival fulfilled its function admirably. It would be naive to expect something more, and presumptious (I feel sure) to depart from the role assigned to us. That is, our presentations were certainly valuable to media people as examples, information and source material. The fact that the means scarcely exist in India to duplicate what we showed them is irrelevant--and comments frequently pointed out that India must find Indian solutions to its peculiar problems. More importantly, our presentations opened a dialogue between broadcasting communities. It may be that the opportunity for candid debate among themselves was as important as exchanges between Indians and Americans, but we definitely made contact, showed a willingness to share what we know and to learn what they're willing to tell us about themselves--and that was very positive.

The main weaknesses are, I think, limitations inherent in any effort to surmount the differences between such different cultures. We shouldn't expect too much and we have to adjust to what we find, as I think we did. Knowing what we know now, I think we might enhance our chances of success by adjusting the presentations somewhat.

3. How would I restructure the presentations? I would definitely stay with single sessions--partly because the exchange among Indians is at least as important as the exchange between us and the audience: to deny the open forum in the interest of efficiency would miss the point, I think (or, at least, miss the Indians' point).

As far as additions or deletions are concerned, I think I would re-edit the excerpt reels to emphasize material most likely to provoke response. I would include a certain amount of razzle-dazzle, but it's obvious to me now that Indians are mainly interested in programs addressing issues that matter to them: social issues, political issues, historical issues. They want to be diverted and amused, but they're not that interested in being impressed. They want to know how we handle sensitive material, ways in which we tackle or evade the kinds of problems Doordarshan tiptoes around. They want to see practical and ingenious approaches to informational programming in all genres--instructional, humanities, news and documentary. And, of course, they all hope to find some way around the problems of production and distribution that frustrate them so. (All we have to offer here

is the assurance that we experience similar frustrations and the faint possibility that such exchanges as this might eventually open some doors.) I would certainly like to sit down with my own reels and contemplate revisions, including more programs like Bond of Iron (which was one of the great hits in Bangalore).

I would also consider the possibility of making complete programs available at on-demand screenings, either during or after the Festival. But I would stick with the use of excerpts in most cases (a few short programs might be shown in their entirety, but I wouldn't attempt anything longer than 30 minutes). I realize rights problems might be tricky, but it would be especially good to follow up on the USIS offer in Bangalore to stock various professional magazines along with selected videotapes for private screenings.

4. Regarding the sorts of questions I got, I think we have to remember that our audiences were probably more conscious of the differences between us than we were. If we assume they're working under conditions like ours, they're too polite (or cynical) to tell us how wrong we are. Most questions related to problems in Indian society and broadcasting. Next came questions about specific excerpts, but there were generally fewer questions about technique than I would have supposed. Most questions were about content or about general questions raised by the content. In private, I got many comments about what people especially liked or about specific interpretations (especially of the video arts excerpts). I also engaged in numerous discussions about the possibility of America distribution--about which, of course, it's hard to say much that's encouraging. In Trivandrum, students were eager for me to address their classes, but there was no time to do that. Their main interest seemed to be in basic approaches to media--how a writer goes about writing a script, etc.--and even here I suspect their main intent was to undercut their own rigidly doctrinaire instructors.

I would say the crucial point here is to know as much as possible about our potential audience--and I guess that depends largely on the people in charge in each community. Fortunately, our team was flexible enough to adjust, and, since the communities were so different, the need to adjust is probably inevitable. From which I deduce a moral: keep selecting such remarkable teams of media acrobats.

I would also like to add, for the record, that all arrangements for my travel and accommodation worked like clockwork--and I have never been so grateful for such efficiency. And our leader--you, dear Ruth--was a paragon in every way. I shudder to think what such a macho group might have done under less vigilant supervision.

Yours till Bombay,

Bernie Dunlap

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AMERICAN VIDEO FESTIVAL IN INDIA, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1986

A CRITIQUE FROM RUTH SPROAT
AMERICAN COORDINATOR
19 JANUARY 1987

The following is my response to the same questions I asked of my colleagues. The "answers" are a combination of personal impressions based on my experiences in coordinating the Festivals; sometimes they are a response to positions they have taken.

1. AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO THE INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS AND TO THE FESTIVAL AS A WHOLE:

There seems to be general agreement that the American Video Festival in India(the format for the presentations as well as the video program excerpts) was well-received. Indian audiences were attentive, involved and not the least hesitant, for the most part, to compliment, criticize or question throughout. Of the three sites, we probably felt less effective in Trivandrum for a number of reasons: the makeup of the audience(primarily students); the local station's equipment was basic and its productions minimal, making the Festival more advanced than their needs required. Also, it was the team's debut and, as I mentioned in earlier correspondence, we may have given less than a stellar performance!

All of us are in agreement that there is a need to describe television broadcasting in the U.S. to enable Indians to better understand the relationship of the Festival programs to American television. To some extent, we tried to include this in our recent presentations. For March, however, an appendix will be added to the catalogue which will graphically portray the variety of broadcasting entities--commercial, public, cable and independent. A brief statement describing the relationship of these television networks to the government, sources of funding, national and local programming concerns, etc. also will be included.

2. FESTIVAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, and 3. RESTRUCTURING PRESENTATIONS

In 1985, and again in 1986, the Festival has been more of a cultural exchange than a workshop in production techniques and procedures. Some members of the team would prefer workshops, but workshops in tv production would require a more narrowly defined audience than we've attracted to date. Audiences now

are made up of tv and film producers, actors, artists, dancers, journalists, administrators, etc. If there is a follow-up to the Video Festivals, consideration might be given to the organization of special interest workshops, as discussed with several kendra directors, and mentioned in my letter to the Subcommission on December 15 (copy enclosed). It is understandable that a team made up of active, "hands-on" individuals would become restless with repeated screenings of the video presentations of colleagues. While it is acknowledged that our collective presence is valuable to the general discussions that follow the formal sessions, this does not preclude other "workshop" type activities taking place at the same time. If there is interest among members of the audience to meet with one of the team who is not "on stage," this can be arranged. We also can continue the practice begun in Bangalore where we made ourselves available for an hour in the mornings, ca. 11 a.m. to 12 noon, to anyone who had specific, special interest questions. The team could even divide this responsibility among the two days(Wednesdays and Thursdays) that allow for such meetings. After all, if nothing else, we are flexible!

While the order of presentations was an arbitrary decision on the part of the Festival's coordinator, the request to have "Television Technology" first on the program was made by Doordarshan Delhi, the sponsor of the event. The March catalogue will carry the same order, but if a local kendra wishes to alter the sequence of presentations for whatever reason, it can be done.

Since we did not have time to show all the video excerpts last year(a total of 12 hours, down 4 hours from the year before), the team has been asked to shorten their video presentations accordingly. Overall, new material from the commercial and cable networks will be added to present a more complete overview of television broadcasting in the U.S.; less well-received segments will be deleted. In so doing, we hope to effect a program that is nicely proportioned with video excerpts that are informative, innovative, practical, and entertaining. All this in 9-10 hours!

Also, to strengthen the audience's understanding of a program production, handouts identified with at least one program per category will be made. They would include a production schedule, budget, personnel, script(s), etc. In the case of educational programs, related study materials will be distributed --student study guides, faculty/administrator's manuals and viewer's guides. (Again, some of these items may end up as appendices in the Festival catalogue.)

Repeated requests to screen certain programs in their entirety were made at each Festival site last year, as well as in 1985. An additional monitor and playback unit would facilitate viewing programs in their entirety. A selection of Festival programs, based on audience interest, will be offered for complete viewing.

The closing symposium generally attracts a smaller attendance than the 3-day video screening sessions. To make it more effective, the team will request

the audience to submit, in written form, the questions they would like raised at the symposium. These questions can be turned in at the close of each of the Tuesday through Thrusday presentations.

4. QUESTIONS RAISED:

Generally, the most frequently asked questions were about the relationship of American television networks to the government. Inevitably, the ensuing discussion led the Indians into a debate, primarily among themselves, on the problems with Doordarshan(India), one channel, programming restrictions and Indian society. At such times, the Festival briefly becomes a forum for Indians to vent their frustrations with Doordarshn, whose representatives are all too familiar with the prevalent and strong criticism leveled at them. While there are many characteristics that point out the vast differences between the two cultures, Indian and American, the question of a government controlled tv network vs. a private one is the most dramatic.

Specifically, within educational and children's television, questions raised had to do with types of programs produced, airdates, funding, etc. In the U.S., students can enroll in television courses for credit; in India, educational programming is broadcast for education's sake.

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15 December 1986

Ted Tanen
American Executive Director
Indo-U.S. Subcommission on Education
and Culture
280 Madison Avenue, #1202
New York, NY 10016

Dear Ted and Sheila:

Enclosed is the first "shipment" of materials about the recently concluded American Video Festival in India. After I have received comments from the team(and hopefully the kendra directors and Mr. Malhotra), I'll follow-up with an outline of the program for Bombay and Pune. Not intending to keep you in suspense, my thinking at the moment is somewhat along the following lines:

Retain with minor changes: television technology, local news, children's and educational television(including non-credit programs, i.e. nutrition, health, family planning, etc.), and documentaries.
Add the following: practical "how to" programming, broadcast and nonbroadcast; more excerpts from commercial television, perhaps by showing a montage of the kinds of tv programming seen during a given day in the U.S.
Reformat: performing arts and humanities.
Eliminate: science, medicine and art video.

There are reasons for these suggestions, but I'll save them for later. (If the truth be known, I'm slipping into the Christmas spirit, emptying my head of heavy duty thinking in the process!)

Warm regards,

Ruth C. Sproat
Director for Higher Education

RCS/S
Encls.

cc: Henry Cauthen

12/15/86

AMERICAN VIDEO FESTIVAL IN INDIA
TRIVANDRUM
NOVEMBER 18-21, 1986

Attendance: About 125, mostly students, Tuesday through Thursday. About 50 attended the seminar on Friday at Chitranjali.

Presentation Site: Kala Bhavan, Kerala State Film Development Corporation and Chitranjali Studio Complex

Arrangements: Very good. The auditorium was satisfactory. The opening ceremony impressive, indeed a warm welcome. We saw no publicity in the papers about the festival; the section, "Trivandrum Today," listed other cultural events, such as a Russian children's photographic exhibit and an Alliance Francais program. There was a large poster outside the bhavan announcing the affair. An in-studio taped interview was produced but doubt it was aired.

Audience Reaction: Generally passive. There may have been difficulty in attracting participants; Trivandrum is tropical-rural and probably lacked a large professional media group on which to draw. Questions mostly from several students; very little participation from Doordarshan Kendra staff; there might have been some reluctance to engage in spirited dialogue because superiors were present. Most questions were in areas of local news and public affairs programming and documentaries; less well received were the excerpts from "La Boheme" and the American Playhouse production, "Paper Angels."

Festival Team: Angell, Bullington and Sproat, Drasnin; Dunlap joined group for Friday's seminar.

Special Festival Participants:

Mr. J. L. Malhotra, public relations, Delhi Doordarshan Directorate
Mr. K. Khunikrishnan, director, Trivandrum Doordarshan Kendra
Mr. P.S. Habeen Mohammed, vice chancellor, Kerala University, Festival Inaugurator

Conclusions: The team, at Festival's end, felt that Trivandrum was the least successful presentation in terms of generating an effective dialogue. The audience seemed interested in the video, but more in terms of entertainment than education in television techniques and production. A combination of factors doubtless contributed to this reaction, including: it was the team's debut and we may not have given a stellar performance; or, our expectations may have been excessive considering the kendra's basic technological status. The kendra director and his staff entertained us at dinner one evening; also the director of tourism in Trivandrum arranged for a tour of Padmanabhaswamy Temple and a boat ride in the Backwaters.

AMERICAN VIDEO FESTIVAL IN INDIA
BANGALORE
NOVEMBER 25-28, 1986

Attendance: About 275-300 Tuesday through Thursday. About 100 attended the seminar on Friday. Audience an excellent mixture of media professionals, educators, students, artists, engineering and science representatives.

Presentation Site: West End Resort Hotel, Bangalore

Arrangements: Excellent. The combined efforts of the Bangalore Doordarshan Kendra and USIS Madras(especially) resulted in a large audience turnout.

Audience Reaction: All sessions were characterized by spirited dialogue and animated discussion in every festival category. Everyone seemed to enjoy that the team quite frequently disagreed with one another on positions taken. Doordarshan again, as in last year's festival, was most everyone's favorite "whipping boy."

Festival Team: Angell, Bullington, Drasnin, Dunlap and Sproat

Presentation: Because the time devoted to video previews reduced the time for audience interaction with the team in Trivandrum, certain video excerpts were eliminated in the Bangalore presentation. Team members made themselves available for special individual meetings during Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Tom and Ruth visited the Bangalore Kendra and had a tour of the facilities which are located in temporary 20-21st floor high-rise quarters. Before leaving Bangalore, we briefly visited the monstrous new kendra under construction away from the city's center. Architecturally, it resembles a castle complete with gothic windows and turrets. The kendra hosted a dinner for the team at Festival's end. On Thanksgiving, the West End Hotel dining room prepared a turkey lunch for the team. Desserts included a chocolate cake decorated with an American flag, sketched with some difficulty by Irv and Ruth(i.e. position of the 50 stars, is the top stripe red or white--very embarassing to almost flunk an exercise that most first graders would breeze through!). George Deligianis, USIS Madras, hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for us at an outdoor restaurant called "The Only Place," whose owner was a Muslim, a former Peace Corps worker and someone who at one time ran a restaurant in Evanston, Illinois!

Special Festival Participants:

Mr. C. Gurunath, director Doordarshan Kendra in Bangalore
Mr. J. L. Malhotra, public relations, Delhi Doordarshan Directorate
Mr. M. Bhaktavatsala, Festival inaugurator
Mr. M. A. Parthasarathy, managing director, Agromore Ltd., Bangalore
Mr. George Deligianis, deputy director, USIS Madras
Mr. K. (Mani) Subramanyan, program manager, USIS Madras(designed invitation and coordinated invitation lists--extraordinary job)

Conclusions: Excellent sessions, so we were told! We did feel good about them, too. Great attendance and audience participation. Doordarshan once again received a good deal of criticism. Attempts to establish a privately owned second television channel, entertained by government, was recently turned down, according to Mr. Parthasarathy. Non-government vs. government television broadcasting was topic that generated considerable discussion. (The moderator, in time, was able to redirect the discussion. While the team found the topic interesting, it had no relevance to our purpose, except that it did dramatize the restrictions on producers in certain areas of programming. Rarely, for example, would documentaries on sensitive issues be approved for broadcast on Doordarshan. Also, the freedom in television news broadcasting in the U.S. has no counterpart in Indian television. News reporting is a factual and straightforward presentation; print media has more freedom in India than television. Non-government conrolled television channels will not appear soon in India; too many problems. Biggest challenge to Doordarshan is the burgeoning video libraries and increase in personal VCRs, especially in cities. Indians were assured that all educational television programs were not in and of themselves complete instructional instruments; all needed the presence of a teacher or a course administrator.

AMERICAN VIDEO FESTIVAL IN INDIA
AHMEDABAD
DECEMBER 2-5, 1986

Attendance: About 125-150, Tuesday through Thursday. About 50 attended the seminar on Friday. Audience a mixture kendra producers, ISRO staff, students from EMRC, and free-lance producer and directors.

Presentation Site: Bhaikaka Bhavan, Ahmedabad

Arrangements: The theatre style bhavan was excellent for viewing and for discussion.

Audience Reaction: The exchange between the team and participants was very good, with comments forthcoming on every category of the program.

Festival Team: Angell, Bullington, Drasnin, and Sproat

Presentation: Again, the team cut back on the video to allow for more discussion and a presentation by the Ahmedabad Kendra of one of its productions. (Entitled, "Reva," it was the beautiful and sensitive story of a Harijan woman, a widow and mother of two children, who overcame village discrimination against her and gained acceptance as the village health worker.) Questions were similar to those raised in Bangalore; criticism of Doordarshan also found its way into the Ahmedabad discussion.

Special Festival Participants:

- Mr. Jyotirdhar Desai, director Doordarshan Kendra, Ahmedabad
- Mr. Umashankar Joshi, literator and educationist made inaugural address
- Mr. Purushottam G. Mavlankar, director, Herold Laski Institute of Political Science; noted educationist. Festival moderator.
- Mr. J. L. Malhotra, public relations officer, Delhi Doordarshan Directorate

Summary: Tom and Ruth visited the kendra, another monstrous facility under construction. A videotaped interview with Ruth was conducted and aired on the nightly news program. Publicity about the Festival appeared in the local press. Tom and Ruth also visited the EMRC(Educational Media Resource Center) at Gujarat University. Dhiren Avashia, the director whom Ruth met last year, took them on a tour of the facility, which Tom felt was the best equipped and managed television facility he had seen, including Doordarshan kendras visited on his two trips to India! Small is indeed better! The hospitality from Mr. Desai and his friends and colleagues was extraordinary. On two separate occasions we were his guests at dinners which allowed us to experience life with the Gujaratis outside a hotel!

THE MEDIA IN INDIA

Press

The major press centers of India are New Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, but most state capitals plus Jalandhar have active press institutions. At the last count (1982), India had a total of 19,937 news publications in English and local languages. The largest percentage of these (29 percent) were in Hindi; the second largest in English (18 percent). There were approximately 1,330 dailies. Most newspapers are independent, although political parties, including the two communist parties (the CPI and the CPM), own a number of them.

Five news agencies, Press Trust of India (PTI), United News of India (UNI), Univarta, Samachar Bharati and Hindustan Samachar serve the Indian media. PTI and UNI are English language news agencies and carry international news. Besides serving a large number of newspapers which translate their stories into 14 different languages, they are the principal news sources for All India Radio (AIR), Doordarshan (Indian television), central and state governments, and other private and public institutions. PTI and UNI have collaboration agreements to get foreign news from various international news agencies which are not allowed to operate independently in India. They also have their own correspondents in major news centers throughout the world.

The Constitution of India provides for unrestricted press freedom in the country. Consequently, Indian newspapers reflect a variety of political, social and economic beliefs. Though the Government controls the allocation of newsprint to each paper and placement of government and public sector ads and thus exercises some indirect influence over the press, its interference is rarely very forceful. This laissez-faire posture on the part of the government leaves the press free to print all but the most sensitive political and security stories. It also accounts for the success of Soviet disinformation efforts particularly through the pro-communist press, over the past few years.

The lack of an Indian freedom of information act makes it difficult to obtain information officially from the government. In addition, the Official Secrets Act empowers the government to jail any individual for disseminating information considered an official secret.

Daily Newspapers

Some important dailies are:

	Circulation
Indian Express (English) (10 editions)	538,000
Times of India (English) (3 editions)	527,000
Malayala Manorama (Malayalam) (3 editions)	510,000
Ananda Bazar Patrika (Bengali) (1 edition)	406,000
Nav Bharat Times (Hindi) (2 editions)	386,000
Thanthi (Tamil) (8 editions)	263,000
Hindustan Times (English) (1 edition)	258,000
Hindu (English) (5 editions)	223,000

SOUTH INDIA

Periodicals Publications

Some important periodicals are:

	Circulation
Malayala Manorama (Malayalam weekly)	578,000
Kumudam (Tamil weekly)	553,000
Dharmayug (Hindi weekly)	248,000
Reader's Digest (English monthly)	220,000
Illustrated Weekly of India (English)	214,000
Sunday (English weekly)	209,000
India Today (English fortnightly)	187,000

Radio and Television

The Government-owned All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (Television) are the only broadcasting and telecasting organizations in the country. AIR has 86 radio stations with an estimated audience of 150 million. There are approximately 25 million radio sets in the country.

Started in 1959 as an experimental service in Delhi, Indian television has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Today, Doordarshan (Indian TV) operates 173 television stations with a telecast range of 40 to 165 kilometers and the potential to reach approximately 70 percent of the population of the country. Until recently Indian television was limited to one channel and to evening programs. At present, however, Delhi and Bombay have a second channel for two hours each evening. Doordarshan is using INSAT-1B to beam educational programs

during the day. Viewing time for the evening programs in most metropolitan cities is from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. India has an estimated 5 million TV sets with an audience of about 50 million.

Because of the growing importance and impact of the broadcast media, there is increasing demand to free radio and television from government control. Recent statements by the Prime Minister showing his reluctance to consider such freedom at the present time, have only heightened nationwide debate on the issue.

Movies

India has about 7,350 permanent-type movie theaters (1983 estimate) with a seating capacity of 3,675,000. Annual attendance is about 2.8 billion. After the termination of an earlier agreement in 1983, India signed a new agreement with the Motion Picture Export Association of America in April 1985 for a three-year period, providing for an annual import of 75 to 100 U.S. films for commercial showings. In 1983, India produced 741 films in 15 languages. Bombay, Calcutta and Madras are the principal film producing centers.

Books

During the last decade Indian publishing has made considerable progress in output, production quality, range and variety. Today it is ranked eighth in the world in total output and third in output of English language titles. Of about 20,000 titles published in India during 1984, almost 40 percent were in English. Of these approximately two-thirds were school and college level textbooks.

India has about 12,000 publishers, and most of them are located in the four major cities - Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and New Delhi. Despite its relatively large publishing industry, the country's literacy level is still below 40 percent. India imports English language publications worth Rs. 250 million per year, of which U.S. books account for about 45 percent.